



Ch. Baquoy sculpt.

Satyre, tu ne le connois pas. Voy. note. pag. 32.

DISCOURS

QUI A REMPORTÉ LE PRIX

A L'ACADEMIE DE DIJON.

En l'année 1750.

Sur cette question proposée par la même Académie:

*Si le rétablissement des Sciences & des Arts a
contribué à épurer les Mœurs.*

PAR UN CITOYEN DE GENÈVE.

Barbarus hic ego sum, quia non intelligor illis. Ovid.



A GENEVE,

Chez BARILLOT & fils.

DISCOURSE

which won the prize
OF THE ACADEMY
OF DIJON

In the year 1750

On this Question proposed by the Academy:
*Whether the restoration of the Sciences and Arts
has contributed to the purification of morals*

By a Citizen of Geneva

*Here I am the barbarian because
they do not understand me.—Ovid*

GENEVA
Barillot & Son



Jacques Sculp.

Satyr, you do not know it. See p. 14.

PREFACE

[1] *Here is one of the grand and finest questions ever raised. This Discourse is not concerned with those metaphysical subtleties that have spread to all departments of Literature, and of which the Programs of Academies are not always free: it is concerned, rather, with one of those truths that affect the happiness of mankind.*

[2] *I expect that I shall not easily be forgiven for the side I have dared to choose. Clashing head on with all that is today admired by men, I can only expect universal blame: and to have been honored by the approbation of a few Wise men ought not to lead me to expect that of the Public. Hence my decision is made. I do not care whether I please Wits or the Fashionable. There will always be men destined to be subjugated by the opinions of their century, of their Country, of their Society: Some men today act the part of the Freethinker and the Philosopher who, for the same reason, would have been but fanatics at the time of the League. One ought not to write for such Readers when one wants to live beyond one's century.*

[3] *One word more, and I have done. Little expecting the honor bestowed on me, I had, after sending off this Discourse, recast and expanded it to the point of making it, as it were, into another Work; I believed myself obliged to restore it today to the state in which it was awarded the prize. I have only thrown in some notes and let stand two additions easy to recognize and of which the Academy might perhaps not have approved. I thought that equity, respect, and gratitude required this notice of me.*

DISCOURSE

We are deceived by the appearance of right.

[4] Has the restoration of the Sciences and Arts contributed to the purification of Morals, or to their corruption? That is what has to be examined. Which side ought I to take in this question? The side, Gentlemen, which becomes an honest man who knows nothing and esteems himself no less for it.

[5] I am sensible to the difficulty of conforming what I have to say to the Tribunal before which I appear. How shall I dare to blame the Sciences before one of the most learned Associations of Europe, praise ignorance in a celebrated Academy, and reconcile contempt for study with respect for the truly Learned? I have seen these contradictions, and they have not deterred me. It is not, so I have told myself, Science I abuse; it is Virtue I defend before virtuous men. Probity is even dearer to Good Men than erudition is to the Learned. What, then, have I to fear? The enlightenment of the Assembly listening to me? I acknowledge it; but only with regard to the composition of the discourse, not to the Speaker's sentiment. Equitable Sovereigns have never hesitated to pass judgment against themselves in debates of doubtful issue; and the most advantageous position in a just cause is to have to defend oneself against a Party of integrity and enlightenment judging in his own case.

[6] To this motive which emboldens me, is joined another which decides me: namely that, having by my natural light upheld the side of truth, there is one Prize which cannot fail me whatever my success: I shall find it in the depths of my heart.

[6]

PART I

[7] It is a grand and fine spectacle to see man go forth as it were out of nothing by his own efforts; to dispel by the lights of his reason the darkness in which nature had enveloped him; to raise himself above himself; to soar by the mind to the celestial realms; to traverse the vast expanse of the Universe with Giant strides, like to the Sun; and, what is grander and more difficult still, to return into himself, there to study man and to know his nature, his duties, and his end. All these wonders have occurred anew in the past few Generations.

[8] Europe had relapsed into the Barbarism of the first ages. A few centuries ago the Peoples of this Part of the World, which is today so enlightened, lived in a state worse than ignorance. I know not what scientific jargon more contemptible still than ignorance had usurped the name of knowledge, and stood as an almost insurmountable obstacle in the path of its return. A revolution was required to return men to common sense; it finally came from the quarter from which it was least to be expected. The stupid Muslim, the eternal scourge of Letters, caused them to be reborn among us. The fall of the Throne of Constantine carried the wreckage of ancient Greece into Italy. France, in turn, was enriched by these precious spoils. Soon the sciences followed Letters; the Art of writing was joined by the Art of thinking, a sequence which appears strange but is perhaps only too natural; and the major advantage of commerce with the muses began to be felt, namely of rendering men more sociable by inspiring in them the desire to please one another with works worthy of their mutual approval.

[9] The mind has its needs, as has the body. The latter make up the foundations of society, the former make for its being agreeable. While the Government and the Laws see to the [7] safety and the well-being of men assembled, the Sciences, Letters, and Arts, less despotic and perhaps more powerful, spread garlands of flowers over the iron chains with which they

are laden, throttle in them the sentiment of that original freedom for which they seemed born, make them love their slavery, and fashion them into what is called civilized Peoples. Need raised up Thrones; the Sciences and Arts have made them strong. Earthly Powers, love talents and protect those who cultivate them!* Civilized peoples, cultivate them: Happy slaves, you owe them the delicate and refined taste on which you pride yourselves; the sweet character and urbane morals which make for such engaging and easy relations among you; in a word, the appearances of all the virtues without having a one.

[10] This is the kind of politeness, the more endearing as it affects to show itself less, that formerly distinguished Athens and Rome in the so much vaunted days of their magnificence and splendor; by it, no doubt, our century and our Nation shall surpass all times and all Peoples. A philosophic tone devoid of pedantry, manners natural yet engaging, as far removed from Teutonic rusticity as from Italian Pantomime: Such are the fruits of taste acquired by good education and perfected in dealings with the World.

[11] How sweet it would be to live among us if the outward countenance were always the image of the heart's dispositions; if decency were virtue; if our maxims were our rules; if genuine Philosophy were inseparable from the title of Philosopher! But so many qualities [8] all too seldom go together, and virtue hardly goes forth with so much pomp. Rich finery may herald a man of wealth, and elegant attire a man of taste; the healthy and robust man is recognized by other signs: strength and vigor of body will be found under the rustic habit of a Plowman, and not under the gilding of a Courtier. Finery is no less alien to virtue, which is the strength and vigor of the soul. The good

* Princes always view with pleasure the dissemination among their subjects of a taste for the agreeable Arts and for superfluities which entail no export of monies. For besides thus nurturing in them that pettiness of soul so suited to servitude, they well know that all the needs which a People imposes on itself are so many chains which it assumes. Alexander, wishing to keep the Ichthyophagi dependent on him, compelled them to give up fishing and to eat the foods common to other Peoples; and the Savages of America who go about altogether naked and who live entirely off the products of their hunt, have proved impossible to tame. Indeed, what yoke could be imposed upon men who need nothing?

man is an Athlete who delights in fighting naked. He despises all those vile ornaments which would hinder his use of his strength, and most of which were invented only to conceal some deformity.

[12] Before Art had fashioned our manners and taught our passions to speak in ready-made terms, our morals were rustic but natural; and differences in conduct conveyed differences of character at first glance. Human nature was, at bottom, no better; but men found their security in how easily they saw through one another, and this advantage, to the value of which we are no longer sensible, spared them a good many vices.

[13] Today, when subtler inquiries and a more refined taste have reduced the Art of pleasing to principles, a vile and deceiving uniformity reigns in our morals, and all minds seem to have been cast in the same mold: constantly politeness demands, propriety commands; constantly one follows custom, never one's own genius. One no longer dares to appear what one is; and under this perpetual constraint, the men who make up the herd that is called society will, when placed in similar circumstances, all act in similar ways unless more powerful motives incline them differently. One will thus never really know with whom one is dealing: in order to know one's friend one will therefore have to wait for great occasions, that is, to wait until it is too late, since it is for these very occasions that it would have been essential to know him.

[14] What a train of vices must attend upon such uncertainty. No more sincere friendships; no more real esteem; no more well-founded trust. Suspensions, offenses, fears, coolness, reserve, hatred, betrayal, will constantly hide beneath this uniform and deceitful veil of politeness, beneath this so much vaunted urbanity which we [9] owe to the enlightenment of our century. One will no longer profane the name of the Lord of the Universe with oaths, but insult it with blasphemies that pass our scrupulous ears without offending them. One will not vaunt one's own desert, but disparage that of others. One will not crudely offend one's enemy, but malign him artfully. National hatreds will die out, but so will the love of Fatherland. Scorned ignorance will be replaced by a dangerous Pyrrhonism. Some excesses will be

proscribed, some vices held in dishonor, but others will be emblazoned with the name of virtues; one will either have to have them or to affect them. Let those who wish to do so, extol the sobriety of the Wise men of the age, but for myself, I see in it but a refinement of intemperance as unworthy of my praise as is their artful simplicity.*

[15] Such is the purity our morals have acquired, this is how we have become good Men. Let Letters, the Sciences, and the Arts each claim their share in such a salutary achievement. I shall add but one reflection: that if an Inhabitant of some distant region, seeking to form an idea of European morals from the state of the Sciences among us, the perfection of our Arts, the propriety of our Theater, the politeness of our manners, the affability of our discourse, our incessant professions of goodwill, and this bustling race of men of all ages and conditions who, from early Dawn until the setting of the Sun, seem at pains to oblige one another; this Stranger, I say, would guess our morals to be precisely the opposite of what they are.

[16] Where there is no effect, no cause need be sought; but here the effect is certain, the depravation real, and our souls have become corrupted in proportion as our Sciences and our Arts have advanced toward perfection. Shall it be said that this is a misfortune peculiar to our age? No, Gentlemen, the ills caused by our vain curiosity are as old [10] as the world. The daily rise and fall of the Ocean's waters have not been more strictly subjected to the course of the Star that illumines us by night, than has the fate of morals and probity to the progress of the Sciences and Arts. Virtue has been seen fleeing in proportion as their light rose on our horizon, and the same phenomenon has been observed at all times and in all places.

[17] Consider Egypt, that first school of the Universe, that fertile climate beneath a brazen sky, that famous land from which Sesostris long ago set out to conquer the World. She became the mother of Philosophy and the fine Arts, and soon

* I like, says Montaigne, to argue and discuss, but only with but a few men and for my own sake. For I find it to be a most unbecoming profession for a man of honor to serve as a Spectacle to the Great and wantonly to display one's mind and one's prattling. It is the profession of all our wits save one.

thereafter was conquered by Cambyses, then by the Greeks, by the Romans, the Arabs, and finally the Turks.

[18] Consider Greece, formerly peopled by Heroes who twice vanquished Asia, once before Troy, and once by their own hearths. Nascent Letters had not yet carried corruption into the hearts of its Inhabitants; but the progress of the Arts, the disintegration of morals, and the Macedonian's yoke closely followed one another; and Greece, ever learned, ever voluptuous, and ever enslaved, thereafter experienced, throughout its revolutions, nothing but a change of masters. All of Demosthenes's eloquence never succeeded in revivifying a body which luxury and the Arts had enervated.

[19] It is at the time of Ennius and of Terence that Rome, founded by a Shepherd and rendered illustrious by Tillers of the soil, begins to degenerate. But after the Ovids, the Catulluses, the Martials, and that host of obscene Writers whose very names offend modesty, Rome, formerly the Temple of Virtue, becomes the Theater of crime, the scandal of Nations, and the sport of barbarians. This Capital of the World finally succumbs to the yoke it had imposed on so many Peoples, and the day of its fall was the eve of the day on which one of its Citizens was given the title of Arbiter of good taste.

[20] What shall I say of the Capital of the Eastern Empire which, by its location, seemed destined to be that of the entire World, that refuge of the Sciences and the Arts banned from the rest of Europe perhaps due more to wisdom than to barbarism. All that is most shameful in debauchery and corruption; blackest in betrayals, assassinations and poisons; most atrocious in the combination of crimes of every kind; [11] that is what makes up the fabric of the History of Constantinople; that is the pure source from which the Enlightenment in which our century glories has come to us.

[21] But why seek in remote times proofs of a truth for which we have abiding testimony before our own eyes. There is in Asia an immense land where Letters are honored and lead to the foremost dignities of State. If the Sciences purified morals, if they taught men to shed their blood for the Fatherland, if they

animated courage, then the Peoples of China should be wise, free, and invincible. But if there is not a single vice that does not rule them; not a single crime that is unfamiliar to them; if neither the enlightenment of the Ministers, nor the presumed wisdom of the Laws, nor the large number of Inhabitants of that vast Empire have been able to protect it from the yoke of the ignorant and coarse Tartar, of what use have all its Scholars been? What benefits has China derived from all the honors bestowed upon them? To be peopled by slaves and evil-doers?

[22] Let us contrast these scenes with that of the morals of the small number of Peoples who, protected against this contamination of vain knowledge, have by their virtues wrought their own happiness and the model for all other Nations. Such were the first Persians, a singular Nation where virtue was learned as Science is learned among us; which so easily mastered Asia, and is the only Nation to enjoy the glory of having the history of its institutions mistaken for a Philosophical Romance. Such were the Scythians of whom such magnificent praise has come down to us: Such were the Germans, whose simplicity, innocence and virtues a pen weary of tracing the crimes and blackness of an educated, opulent, and voluptuous People, took relief in depicting. Such had been Rome itself in the times of its poverty and ignorance. Such, finally, has shown itself to be down to our own day the rustic nation so vaunted for its courage which adversity could not subdue, and its faithfulness which example could not corrupt.*[12]

[23] It was not owing to stupidity that they preferred other forms of exercise to those of the mind. They were not ignorant of the fact that in other lands idle men spent their lives arguing about the sovereign good, [and] vice and virtue, or that prideful ratiocinators heaped the greatest praise upon themselves while

* I dare not speak of those happy Nations which do not know even by name the vices we have so much difficulty in repressing, those savages of America whose simple and natural polity Montaigne unhesitatingly prefers not only to Plato's *Laws*, [13] but even to everything that Philosophy could ever imagine as most perfect for the government of Peoples. He cites numerous examples striking to those able to admire them: "But then," says he, "they wear no breeches!"

assimilating all other Peoples under the contemptuous name of barbarians; but they considered their morals and learned to disdain their teaching.*

[24] Can I forget that it was in the very lap of Greece that was seen to arise the City equally famed for its happy ignorance and for the wisdom of its Laws, that Republic of demi-Gods rather than of men, so much superior to humanity did their virtues appear? O Sparta! eternal shame to a vain teaching! While the vices, led by the fine Arts, together insinuated themselves into Athens, while a Tyrant was there so carefully assembling the works of the Prince of Poets, you expelled the Arts and Artists, the Sciences and Scientists from your walls.

[25] The event confirmed this difference. Athens became the home of sophistication and of taste, the country of Orators and Philosophers. The elegance of its Buildings matched that of the language. Marble and canvas enlivened by the hands of the most skillful Masters could be seen everywhere. From Athens issued those astounding works that will stand as models in every corrupt age. The Picture of Lacedaemon is less brilliant. *There, the other Peoples used to say, [13] men are born virtuous, and the very air of the Country seems to inspire virtue.* All that is left us of its Inhabitants is the memory of their heroic deeds. Are such monuments worth less to us than the quaint marbles left us by Athens?

[26] Some few wise men did, it is true, withstand the general tide, and guard against vice in the midst of the Muses. But listen to the indictment by the foremost and the most wretched of them, of the Learned and the Artists of his time.

[27] "I have," he says, "examined the Poets, and I consider them to be people whose talent impresses themselves and

* I should honestly like to be told what must have been the Athenians' own opinion about eloquence, when they so carefully excluded it from that upright Tribunal whose Judgments the Gods themselves did not appeal? What did the Romans think of medicine when they banished it from their Republic? And when a residue of humanity led the Spaniards to forbid their Lawyers entry into America, what must have been their idea of Jurisprudence? Do they not appear to have believed that with this one Edict they could make up for all the evils they had inflicted on those wretched Indians?

others, who claim to be wise men, who are taken to be such, and who are anything but that."

[28] "From the Poets," Socrates continues, "I went on to the Artists. No one was more ignorant of the Arts than I; no one was more convinced that the Artists possessed some very fine secrets. Yet I perceived that their condition is no better than the Poets', and that they both labor under the same prejudice. Because the most skilled among them excel in their particular Field, they look upon themselves as the wisest of men. In my eyes this presumption has completely tarnished their knowledge: So that, putting myself in the place of the Oracle, and asking myself what I would prefer, to be what I am or what they are, to know what they have learned or to know that I know nothing, I answered myself and the God: I want to remain what I am.

[29] "We do not know, neither the Sophists nor the Poets, nor the Orators, nor the Artists, nor I, what is the true, the good, and the beautiful: But there is this difference between us that, although these people know nothing, they all believe themselves to know something: Whereas I, while I know nothing, am at least not in any doubt about that. So that the whole superiority in wisdom which the Oracle attributes to me reduces to this, that I am fully convinced that I am ignorant of what I do not know."

[30] Here, then, is the Wisest of men in the Judgment of the Gods, and the most learned of Athenians according to the sense of all Greece, Socrates, speaking in Praise of ignorance! Does anyone believe that, if he were to be reborn among us, our [14] Learned and our Artists would make him change his mind? No, Gentlemen, this just man would continue to despise our vain Sciences; he would not help swell the mass of books that flood in on us from all sides, and the only precept which he would leave is the precept which he did leave to his disciples and to our Descendents, the example and the memory of his virtue. It is fine thus to teach men!

[31] Socrates had begun in Athens, the elder Cato continued in Rome to inveigh against those artful and subtle Greeks who seduced virtue and enervated the courage of his fellow-citizens.

But the Sciences, the Arts, and dialectics once again prevailed. Rome filled up with Philosophers and Orators; military discipline came to be neglected, agriculture despised; Sects joined, and the Fatherland forgotten. The sacred names of liberty, disinterestedness, obedience to the Laws, were replaced by the names of Epicurus, Zeno, Arcesilaus. *Ever since the Learned have begun to appear among us*, so their own Philosophers themselves said, *good Men have been in eclipse*. Until then the Romans had been content to practice virtue; all was lost when they began to study it.

[32] O Fabricius! What would your great soul have thought if, unhappily recalled to life, you had seen the pompous countenance of that Rome which your arm rescued and your good name adorned more than did all of her conquests? "Gods!" you would have said, "what has become of the thatch roofs and the rustic hearths where moderation and virtue used to dwell? What fatal splendor has replaced Roman simplicity? What is this alien speech? What are these effeminate morals? What is the meaning of these statues, these Paintings, these buildings? Fools, what have you done? You, the Masters of Nations, made yourselves the slaves of the frivolous men you vanquished? Do Rhetoricians govern you? Was it in order to enrich Architects, Painters, Sculptors, and Thespians that you spilled your blood in Greece and in Asia? Have the spoils of Carthage become the prey of a flute-player? Romans, hasten to overturn these Amphitheaters; smash these marbles; burn these paintings; drive out these slaves who [15] subjugate you and whose fatal arts corrupt you. Let other hands acquire fame for vain talents; the only talent worthy of Rome is that of conquering the world and making virtue reign in it. When Cineas took our Senate for an Assembly of Kings he was not dazzled by vain pomp or studied elegance. He did not, in that Senate, hear the frivolous eloquence that is the object of study and delight of futile men. What, then, did Cineas see that was so majestic? O Citizens! He saw a spectacle which neither your riches nor all your arts shall ever succeed in exhibiting; the finest spectacle ever to appear under heaven, the Assembly of two hundred virtuous men worthy of commanding in Rome, and of governing the earth."

[33] But let us cross the distance of place and time, and see what has occurred in our lands and before our own eyes; or rather, let us set aside repugnant depictions that would offend our delicacy, and spare ourselves the trouble of repeating the same thing with different names. My invoking Fabricius's shade was not haphazard; and what did I have this great man say that I could not have put into the mouth of Louis XII or of Henry IV? Among us, it is true, Socrates would not have drunk the hemlock; but he would have drunk from a cup more bitter still, the insulting jeers and the scorn that are a hundred times worse than death.

[34] That is how luxury, dissoluteness, and slavery have at all times been the punishment visited upon our prideful efforts to leave the happy ignorance in which eternal wisdom had placed us. The heavy veil it had drawn over all of its operations seemed sufficiently to warn us that it had not destined us for vain inquiries. But is there even one of its lessons from which we have known how to profit, or which we have neglected with impunity? Peoples, know, then, once and for all, that nature wanted to preserve you from science as a mother snatches a dangerous weapon from the hands of her child; that all the secrets she hides from you are so many evils from which she protects you, and that the difficulty you have in learning is not the least of her favors. Men are perverse; they would be worse still if they had had the misfortune of being born learned.

[35] How humiliating to humanity such reflections are! [16] How greatly mortified our pride must be by them! What! probity the daughter of ignorance? Science and virtue incompatible? What conclusions might not be drawn from such prejudices? But in order to resolve these apparent contradictions one need only examine closely the vanity and vacuousness of those proud titles which dazzle us and which we so gratuitously bestow on human knowledge. Let us, therefore, consider the Sciences and the Arts in themselves. Let us see what must result from their progress; and let us no longer hesitate to grant all the points where our reasoning shall be found to agree with the historical inferences.

[17]

PART II

[36] According to an ancient tradition passed on from Egypt to Greece, a God inimical to men's repose was the inventor of the sciences.* What, then, must the Egyptians themselves, among whom the sciences were born, have thought of them! It is that they saw near at hand the sources that had brought them forth. Indeed, whether one consults the annals of the world, or supplements uncertain chronicles with philosophical inquiries, one will not find an origin of human knowledge that corresponds to the idea one would like to hold regarding it. Astronomy was born of superstition; Eloquence of ambition, hatred, flattery, lying; Geometry of avarice; Physics of a vain curiosity; all of them, even Ethics, of human pride. The Sciences and the Arts thus owe their birth to our vices; we should be less in doubt regarding their advantages if they owed it to our virtues.

[37] Their flawed origin is all too clearly mirrored for us in their objects. What would we do with the Arts without luxury to sustain them? Without men's injustices, of what use would Jurisprudence be? What would become of History if there were neither Tyrants, nor Wars, nor Conspirators? In short, who would want to spend his life in barren thoughts if everyone consulted only man's duties and nature's needs, and had time only for the Fatherland, for the unfortunate, and for his [18] friends? Are we, then, destined to die tied to the edge of the well to which truth has withdrawn? This reflection alone should from the very outset deter anyone seriously trying to educate himself by studying Philosophy.

[38] How many dangers! How many wrong roads in the investigation of the Sciences! How many errors a thousand times

* It is easy to see the allegory of the Prometheus fable; and it does not appear that the Greeks who nailed him to Mount Caucasus thought any more favorably of him than did the Egyptians of their God Theuth. "The satyr," says an ancient fable, "wanted to kiss and embrace fire the first time he saw it; but Prometheus cried out to him: 'Satyr, you will weep the loss of the beard on your chin, for it burns when you touch it.' " That is the subject of the frontispiece.

more dangerous than the truth is useful, have to be overcome in order to reach it? The drawbacks are manifest: for falsehood admits of an infinite number of combinations; but truth has only one mode of being. Besides, who seeks it altogether sincerely? But even with the best will, by what indices is one sure to recognize it? Amid this host of different sentiments, what shall be our criterion for it?* And, most difficult of all, if we should have the good fortune of finally finding it, who of us will know how to use it well?

[39] While our sciences are vain with respect to the objects they pursue, they are even more dangerous in the effects they produce. Born in idleness, they nourish it in turn; and the irreparable loss of time is the first injury they necessarily inflict on society. In politics, as in ethics, not to do good is a great evil, and every useless citizen may be looked upon as a pernicious man. Answer me then, illustrious Philosophers, you to whom we owe it to know in what ratios bodies attract one another in a vacuum; the proportions between areas swept in equal times by the revolutions of the planets; which curves have conjugate points, which have inflection points, and which cusps; how man sees everything in God; how the soul and the body correspond to one another without communicating, like two clocks; what stars may be inhabited; what insects reproduce in some extraordinary fashion. [19] Answer me, I say, you from whom we have received so much sublime knowledge; if you had never taught us any of these things, would we have been any the less numerous for it, any the less well governed, the less formidable, the less flourishing, or the more perverse? Reconsider the importance of your achievements, then; and if the labors of our most enlightened learned men and our best Citizens provide us with so little that is useful, tell us what we are to think of that host of obscure Writers and idle Literati who devour the State's substance at a pure loss.

* The less one knows, the more one believes oneself to know. Did the Peripatetics doubt anything? Did not Descartes construct the Universe with cubes and vortices? Is there even nowadays in Europe a Physicist, however paltry, who would not make bold to explain the profound mystery of electricity, which will perhaps forever remain the despair of true Philosophers?

[40] Did I say idle? Would to God they indeed were! Morals would be the healthier and society more peaceful. But these vain and futile declaimers go off in all directions, armed with their deadly paradoxes, undermining the foundations of faith and annihilating virtue. They smile disdainfully at such old-fashioned words as Fatherland and Religion, and dedicate their talents and their Philosophy to destroying and degrading all that is sacred among men. Not that they at bottom hate either virtue or our dogmas; rather, they are the enemies of public opinion; and in order to bring them back to the feet of the altars, one would only have to banish them among Atheists. O rage for distinction, what will you not do?

[41] The abuse of time is a great evil. Other, even worse evils follow in the wake of the Letters and Arts. One of these is luxury, born, like they, of men's idleness and vanity. Luxury is seldom found without the sciences and the arts, and they are never found without it. I know that our Philosophy, ever fertile in singular maxims, contends, in the face of the experience of all centuries, that luxury makes for the splendor of States; but after forgetting the necessity of sumptuary laws, will it also dare deny that good morals are essential if Empires are to endure, and that luxury is diametrically opposed to good morals? Granting that luxury is a certain sign of riches; that, if you like, it even serves to increase them; what conclusion is to be drawn from this paradox so worthy of being born in our time; and what will become of virtue when one has to get rich at all cost? The ancient political Thinkers forever spoke of morals and of virtue; ours speak only of commerce and of money. One will tell you that in a given [20] land a man is worth the sum for which he would be sold in Algiers; another, pursuing this calculation, will find countries where a man is worth nothing, and others where he is worth less than nothing. They appraise men like herds of cattle. According to them a man is worth to the State only what he consumes in it. By that token one Sybarite would easily have been worth thirty Lacedaemonians. Try to guess, then, which of the two Republics, Sparta or Sybaris, was subdued by a handful of peasants, and which caused Asia to tremble.

[42] The Monarchy of Cyrus was conquered with thirty thou-

sand men by a Prince poorer than the least Persian Satrap; and the Scythians, the most miserable of all Peoples, resisted the most powerful Monarchs of the Universe. Two famed Republics contended for the Empire of the World; one was very rich and the other had nothing, and it was the latter which destroyed the first. The Roman Empire, having swallowed all the riches of the Universe, in its turn fell prey to men who did not so much as know what riches were. The Franks conquered the Gauls, and the Saxons conquered England with no other treasures than their bravery and their poverty. A band of poor Mountaineers whose entire greed was confined to a few sheepskins, having tamed Austrian pride, went on to crush the opulent and formidable House of Burgundy before which the Potentates of Europe trembled. Finally, all the power and wisdom of Charles the Fifth's heir, backed by all the treasures of the Indies, were beaten by a handful of herring fishers. Let our political thinkers deign to suspend their calculations in order to reflect on these examples, and learn once and for all that with money one has everything except morals and Citizens.

[43] What, then, precisely is at issue in this question of luxury? To know what matters most to Empires, to be brilliant and short-lived, or virtuous and long-lasting. I say brilliant, but by what luster? A taste for ostentation is scarcely ever combined in one soul with a taste for the honest. No, Minds debased by a host of futile cares cannot possibly ever rise to anything great; and even if they had the requisite strength, they would lack the courage. [21]

[44] Every Artist wants to be applauded. His contemporaries' praise is the most precious portion of his reward. What, then, will he do to obtain it, if he has the misfortune to be born among a People and at a time when the Learned, having become fashionable, have placed frivolous youths in the position of setting the tone; when men have sacrificed their taste to the Tyrants of their freedom;* when masterpieces of dramatic Poetry

* I am far from thinking that this ascendancy of women is in itself an evil. It is a gift bestowed upon them by nature for the happiness of Mankind: better directed, it might produce as much good as it nowadays does harm. We are not sufficiently sensible to the benefits that would accrue to society if the half of

are dropped [from repertories] and wonders of harmony rejected because one of the sexes dares to approve only of what suits the other's pusillanimity? What will he do, Gentlemen? He will lower his genius to the level of his century, and compose popular works that are admired during his lifetime rather than marvels that would be admired only long after his death. Tell us, famed Arouet, how many manly and strong beauties you have sacrificed to our false delicacy, and how many great things the spirit of gallantry, so prolific in small things, has cost you?

[45] That is how the dissolution of morals, the necessary consequence of luxury, in turn leads to the corruption of taste. If, by chance, someone among the men of extraordinary talents were steadfast of soul, and refused to yield to the genius of his century and to debase himself by puerile productions, woe betide him! He will die in poverty and oblivion. Would that I were making a prediction and not reporting an experience! Carle, Pierre; the time has come when the brush intended to enhance the majesty of our Temples with sublime and holy images will either fall from your hands or be prostituted to decorate the panels of a carriage with lascivious pictures. And you, the rival [22] of the likes of Praxiteles and of Phidias, you whose chisel the ancients would have employed to make them such Gods as would have excused their idolatry in our eyes, inimitable Pigal, either your hand will consent to burnish the belly of some grotesque figurine, or it will have to remain idle.

[46] One cannot reflect on morals, without taking delight in recalling the image of the simplicity of the first times. It is a fair shore, adorned by the hands of nature alone, toward which one forever turns one's eyes, and from which one feels oneself moving away with regret. When innocent and virtuous men liked to have the Gods for witnesses of their deeds, they lived together in the same huts; but soon, having become wicked,

Mankind which governs the other were given a better education. Men will always be what it pleases women that they be: so that if you want them to become great and virtuous, teach women what greatness of soul and virtue is. The reflections to which this subject lends itself, and which Plato made in former times, amply deserve to be more fully detailed by a pen worthy of modeling itself on such a master and of defending so grand a cause.

they wearied of these inconvenient onlookers and banished them to magnificent Temples. At last they drove them out of the Temples in order to settle in them themselves, or at least the Temples of the Gods became indistinguishable from the homes of the citizens. That was the period of the utmost depravation; and the vices were never carried to a greater pitch than when they were, so to speak, seen borne up on columns of marble and carved on Corinthian capitals at the entrance to the Palaces of the Great.

[47] While the conveniences of life increase, the arts improve, and luxury spreads, true courage is enervated, the military virtues vanish, and this too is the work of the sciences and of all the arts that are practiced in the closeness of the study. When the Goths ravaged Greece, the Libraries were saved from fire only because of the opinion, spread by one of them, that the enemy should be left furnishings so well suited to distract them from military exercise and to keep them amused with idle and sedentary occupations. Charles the Eighth found himself master of Tuscany and of the Kingdom of Naples almost without having drawn sword; and his entire Court attributed this unexpected ease to the fact that the Italian Princes and Nobility amused themselves more trying to become ingenious and learned, than they exerted themselves trying to become vigorous and warlike. Indeed, says the sensible man who reports these two episodes, all examples teach us that in this martial polity as well as in all others like it, the study of the sciences is much more apt to soften and effeminate men's courage than to strengthen and animate it. [23]

[48] The Romans admitted that military virtue died out among them in proportion as they began to be knowledgeable about Paintings, Etchings, Goldsmiths' vessels, and to cultivate the fine arts; and as if that famous land had been destined forever to serve as an example to other peoples, the rise of the Medicis and the restoration of Letters destroyed once more and perhaps forever the martial reputation which, a few centuries ago, Italy seemed to have recovered.

[49] The ancient Republics of Greece, with the wisdom that was so conspicuous in most of their institutions, had forbidden

their Citizens the exercise of all those quiet and sedentary occupations which, by allowing the body to grow slack and corrupted, soon enervate the vigor of the soul. How, indeed, can men overwhelmed by the least need and repelled by the least pain, be expected to face up to hunger, thirst, fatigues, dangers, and death. With what courage will soldiers bear up under extreme labors to which they are in no way accustomed? With what spirit will they go on forced marches under Officers who have not even the strength to travel on horseback? Do not cite the renowned valor of all these scientifically trained modern warriors as an objection against me. I hear praised their bravery on a day of battle, but I am not told how they bear up under extreme labors, how they withstand the harshness of the seasons and the inclemency of the weather. A little sunshine or a little snow, the want of a few superfluities, is enough to melt and destroy the best of our armies in a few days. Intrepid warriors, suffer, for once, the truth which you so rarely hear; you are brave, I know; you would have triumphed with Hannibal at Cannae and at Trasimene; with you Caesar would have crossed the Rubicon and reduced his country to servitude; but it is not with you that the one would have crossed the Alps, and the other vanquished your ancestors.

[50] Success in battles does not always make for success in war, and there is for Generals an art higher than that of winning battles. A man may boldly run into the line of fire, and yet be a very bad officer; even a [common] soldier may need a little more strength and vigor than all that bravery [24] which does not protect him from death; and what difference does it make to the State whether its troops die by fever and cold, or by the enemy's sword?

[51] While the cultivation of the sciences is harmful to the martial qualities, it is even more so to the moral qualities. From our very first years a senseless education adorns our mind and corrupts our judgment. Everywhere I see huge establishments in which young people are brought up at great expense to learn everything except their duties. Your children will not know their own language, but they will speak others which are

nowhere in use; they will be able to compose Verses which they will hardly be able to understand; without being able to disentangle error from truth, they will possess the art of making them unrecognizable to others by specious arguments; but they will not know the meaning of the words magnanimity, equity, temperance, humanity, courage; the sweet name Fatherland will never strike their ear; and if they hear God spoken of at all, it will be less to be in awe than to be in fear of him.* I would as soon, said a Wise man, that my pupil had spent his time on the Tennis Court, at least his body would have been fitter for it. I know that children have to be kept busy, and that idleness is the danger most to be feared for them. What then should they learn? That is certainly a fine question! Let them learn what they ought to do when they are men,** and not what they ought to forget. [25]

[52] Our gardens are decorated with statues and our Galleries with pictures. What would you think these masterpieces of art, exhibited for public admiration, represent? The defenders of the Fatherland or those still greater men who enriched it with their virtues? No. They are images of all the aberrations of the heart and of the reason, carefully culled from ancient Mythology, and presented to our children's curiosity at an early age,

* Pens[ées] Philosoph[iques].

** Such was the education of the Spartans according to the greatest of their Kings. It is well worth considering, says Montaigne, that in that excellent and indeed truly monstrously perfect polity of Lycurgus, although it was so very attentive to the nurture of children, whom it regarded as its main responsibility, and although it was situated in the very seat of the Muses, so little mention should be made of doctrine: as if those magnanimous youths, disdainful of every other yoke, required only Teachers of valor, prudence, and justice, instead of our Teachers of science.

Let us now see what the same Author says about the ancient Persians. Plato, he says, tells that the eldest son in their Royal line was brought up as follows. After his birth he was handed over not to women, but to Eunuchs who, because of their virtue, enjoyed the greatest authority with the King. They took charge of making his body fair and healthy, and after seven years they taught him to ride and to hunt. When he reached his fourteenth year, they placed him in the hands of four persons: the wisest, the most just, the most temperate, and the most valiant in the Nation. The first taught him Religion, the second always to be true, the third to conquer his appetites, the fourth to fear nothing. All, I would add, to make him good, none to make him learned.

doubtless so that they may have models of bad deeds in front of their eyes even before they can read.

[53] Where do all these abuses arise, if not in the fatal inequality introduced among men by the distinction of talents and the disparagement of the virtues? That is the most obvious effect of all our studies, and the most dangerous of all their consequences. People no longer ask whether a man has probity, but whether he has talents; nor whether a Book is useful, but whether it is well-written. Rewards are lavished upon wits, and virtue remains without honors. There are a thousand prizes for fine discourses, none for fine deeds. And yet I should like to be told whether the glory attaching to the best of the discourses that will be crowned by this Academy is comparable to the merit of having established the prize? [26]

[54] The wise man does not run after fortune; but he is not insensitive to glory; and when he sees it so badly distributed, his virtue, which a little emulation would have animated and turned to the advantage of society, languishes and dies in misery and oblivion. This is what, in the long run, the preference for the agreeable over the useful talents must everywhere bring about, and what experience has only all too fully confirmed since the revival of the sciences and arts. We have Physicists, Geometricians, Chemists, Astronomers, Poets, Musicians, Painters; we no longer have citizens; or, if we still have some, dispersed in our abandoned rural areas, they waste away indigent and despised. Such is the condition to which those who give us bread and our children milk are reduced, and such are the sentiments they get from us.

Astyages, in Xenophon, asks Cyrus for an account of his last Lesson: It was this, said he, that in our school a big boy who had a small coat gave it to one of his companions who was smaller than himself, and took from him his coat, which was larger. Our Preceptor, having appointed me judge of this difference, I judged that matters should be left in this state, and that in this respect they each seemed better suited. Whereupon he remonstrated with me, saying that I had acted wrongly, for I had paused to consider what was fitting; and one ought in the first place to have heeded justice, which requires that no one be forced in what belongs to him. And he said that he was punished as we were punished in our villages for having forgotten the first aorist of *τύπτω*. My Schoolmaster would have to deliver me a fine harangue in *genere demonstrativo* to persuade me that his school is as good as that one.

[55] I nevertheless admit that the evil is not as great as it might have become. Eternal foresight, by placing medicinal herbs next to various noxious plants and the antidote into the very substance of the bites of a number of injurious animals, has taught Sovereigns, who are its ministers, to imitate its wisdom. By following its example, the great Monarch, whose glory will only acquire greater luster with every succeeding age, drew from the very bosom of the sciences and arts, the sources of a thousand aberrations, those famous societies that are charged with the dangerous trust of human knowledge at the same time as they are charged with the sacred trust of morals, by the care they take to preserve them in all their purity in their own midst, as well as to require them from the members they admit.

[56] These wise institutions, strengthened by his august successor and imitated by all the Kings of Europe, will at least act as checks on men of letters who, since they all aspire to the honor of being admitted to the Academies, will watch themselves and strive to make themselves worthy of it by useful works and irreproachable morals. Those among these Associations that will select for prize competitions honoring literary merit, topics apt to revive the love of virtue in Citizens' hearts, will show that such love reigns among them, and give Peoples the altogether rare and sweet pleasure of seeing learned societies dedicated to disseminating among Mankind not only [27] agreeable enlightenment, but also salutary teachings.

[57] Do not, therefore, urge as an objection against me what I regard as but one more proof. So many precautions all too clearly show the need for them, and no one looks for remedies to nonexistent evils. Why should the fact that they are inadequate stamp them as also common remedies? So many organizations established for the benefit of the learned, are all the more apt to make the objects of the sciences appear impressive and to direct men's minds to their cultivation. To judge by the precautions being taken, it would appear that there is a surplus of Ploughmen and fear of a shortage of Philosophers. I do not wish here to venture a comparison between agriculture and philosophy, it would not be tolerated. I will only ask, what is Philosophy? What do the writings of the best-known philosophers contain?

What are the Lessons of these lovers of wisdom? To listen to them, might they not be taken for a troop of charlatans, each hawking from his own stand on a public square: come to me, I am the only one who does not deceive? One claims that there are no bodies and that everything is in idea. Another that there is no substance other than matter, and no God other than the world. This one urges that there are neither virtues nor vices, and that moral good and evil are chimeras. That other, that men are wolves and may devour one another in good conscience. O great Philosophers! why do you not reserve these profitable Lessons for your friends and your children; you would soon reap the reward for them, and we would not have to fear finding one of your followers among our own friends and children.

[58] These, then, are the wonderful men on whom the esteem of their contemporaries was lavished during their lifetimes, and for whom immortality was reserved after their deaths! These are the wise maxims we have received from them and which we will transmit from age to age to our descendants. Has Paganism, given to all the aberrations of human reason, left to posterity anything comparable to the shameful memorials of reason made by Printing during the reign of the Gospel? The impious writings of such men as Leucippus and Diagoras perished with them. The art of immortalizing [28] the extravagances of the human mind had not yet been invented. But thanks to Typography* and to the use we make of it, the dangerous reveries of such men as Hobbes and Spinoza will last forever. Go, famed writings of

* Considering the frightful disorders Printing has already caused in Europe, and judging of the future by the progress this evil daily makes, it is easy to foresee that before long sovereigns will take as many pains to banish this terrible art from their States as they took to establish it in them. Sultan Achmed, yielding to the importunings of some supposed men of taste, had consented to establish a Printing Shop in Constantinople. But the press had hardly begun to run when it had to be destroyed and the equipment to be thrown into a well. It is said that the Calif Omar, when asked what should be done with the library of Alexandria, answered in these terms: "If the Books in this library contain things contrary to the Koran they are bad and ought to be burned. If they contain nothing but the doctrine of the Koran, burn them still: they are superfluous." Our Learned men have cited this reasoning as the height of absurdity. Yet suppose Gregory the Great in the place of Omar and the Gospel in the place of the Koran, the Library would still have been burned, and it might perhaps be the finest episode in that Illustrious Pontiff's life.

which our Forefathers' ignorance and rusticity would have been incapable; go to our descendants in company with those still more dangerous works that exude the corruption of our century's morals, and together transmit to future centuries a faithful history of the progress and the benefits of our sciences and our arts. If they read you, you will leave them in no doubt regarding the question we are examining today; and unless they are more devoid of sense than are we, they will raise their hands to Heaven and say with a bitter heart: "Almighty God, you who hold all Minds in your hands, deliver us from the Enlightenment and the fatal arts of our Forefathers, and restore us to ignorance, innocence, and poverty, the only goods that can make for our happiness and that are precious in your sight."

[59] But if the progress of the sciences and the arts has added nothing to our genuine felicity; if it has corrupted our morals, and if the corruption of morals has injured the purity of taste, what are we to think of that crowd of Popularizers who have removed the difficulties which protected the approaches to the Temple of [29] the Muses and which nature had placed there as a trial of the strength of those who might be tempted to know? What are we to think of those Anthologizers of works which have indiscreetly broken down the gate of the Sciences and introduced into their Sanctuary a populace unworthy of coming near it; whereas what would have been desirable is to have had all those who could not go far in a career in Letters deterred from the outset, and become involved in Arts useful to society? Someone who his whole life long will remain a bad versifier or an inferior Geometer, might perhaps have become a great clothier. Those whom nature intended as her disciples had no need of masters. Such men as Verulam, Descartes and Newton, these Preceptors of Mankind, had none themselves, and indeed what guides could have led them as far as their own vast genius carried them? Ordinary Masters could only have cramped their understanding by confining it within the narrow scope of their own: The first obstacles taught them to exert themselves and to practice covering the immense distance which they traveled. If a few men are to be allowed to devote themselves to the study of the Sciences and the Arts, it must be only those who feel the

strength to go forth alone in their footsteps, and to overtake them: It belongs to this small number to raise monuments to the glory of the human mind. But if nothing is to be beyond their genius, nothing must be beyond their hopes. That is the only encouragement they need. The soul insensibly proportions itself to the objects that occupy it, and it is great occasions that make great men. The Prince of Eloquence was Consul of Rome, and perhaps the greatest of Philosophers was Lord Chancellor of England. Is it likely that if the one had merely occupied a chair in some University and the other received a modest pension from an Academy, is it likely, I say, that their works would not have smacked of their condition? Let Kings, therefore, not disdain admitting into their councils the people most capable of counseling them well: let them reject the old prejudice invented by the pride of the Great, that the art of leading Peoples is more difficult than that of enlightening them; as if [30] it were easier to move men to act well of their own accord than to compel them to do so by force. Let learned men of the first rank find honorable asylum in their courts. Let them there receive the only reward worthy of them; by the credit they enjoy, to contribute to the happiness of the Peoples to whom they have taught wisdom. Only then will it be possible to see what virtue, science, and authority, animated by a noble emulation and working in concert for the felicity of Mankind, can do. But as long as power remains by itself on one side, [and] enlightenment and wisdom by themselves on the other, the learned will rarely think great things, Princes will more rarely still perform fine ones, and Peoples will continue to be base, corrupt, and wretched.

[60] As for ourselves, common men, to whom Heaven has not vouchsafed such great talents and whom it does not destine for so much glory, let us remain in our obscurity. Let us not run after a reputation which would escape us and which, in the present state of things, would never restore what it would have cost us, even if we had every title to obtain it. What good is it to seek our happiness in the opinion of another if we can find it within ourselves? Let us leave to others the care of instructing Peoples in their duties, and confine ourselves to fulfilling our

own duties well, we have no need of knowing more.

[61] O virtue! Sublime science of simple souls, are so many efforts and so much equipment really required to know you? Are not your principles engraved in all hearts, and is it not enough, in order to learn your Laws, to return into oneself and, in the silence of the passions, to listen to the voice of one's conscience? That is true Philosophy, let us know how to rest content with it; and without envying the glory of those famous men who render themselves immortal in the Republic of Letters, let us try to place between them and ourselves the glorious distinction formerly seen between two great Peoples: that the one knew how to speak well, and the other to act well.

EDITOR'S NOTES

The present standard edition of Rousseau's works is Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Oeuvres complètes*, B. Gagnebin and M. Raymond, eds. (Paris: Pléiade, 1959–), of which four volumes have so far appeared; it includes all the works translated in this volume, except the *Essay on the Origin of Languages*; the bracketed italic numbers throughout the translations refer to the pagination of the original in the Pléiade edition; all references to that edition in the following notes are abbreviated *OC*, followed by a Roman numeral indicating the volume, and an Arabic numeral indicating the page(s).

The present standard edition of Rousseau's correspondence is Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Correspondance complète*, collected, edited, and annotated by R. A. Leigh (Geneva: Institut et Musée Voltaire; Oxford: The Voltaire Foundation at the Taylor Institution, 1965–). Forty-three volumes of this remarkable work have so far appeared; all references to it throughout the present volume are abbreviated *CC*, followed by a Roman numeral indicating the volume, and an Arabic numeral indicating the page(s).

FIRST DISCOURSE, pages 1–27

The Dijon *Académie des sciences et belles lettres* announced the topic of its 1750 prize essay competition—"Has the restoration of the Sciences and Arts contributed to the purification of morals?"—in the October 1749 *Mercure de France*. Entries had to be submitted by April 1, 1750, and they were to take up no more than half an hour's reading time. The Academy reached its decision in July, and announced it in August. It is worth noting that in that announcement, it expressly stated that Rousseau's essay won first place because he had answered its question in the negative. The only other entry to have done so as well, took second place. The Academy also took note of the strongly republican tone of Rousseau's *Discourse*, and expressly stated that it was awarding it the prize in spite of it.

Rousseau on several occasions in later life recalled his excitement on first reading the announcement of the Academy's topic. He had gone to visit his friend Diderot, who had just been released from the Vincennes dungeon but was still confined to the castle grounds for

having—anonously—published his *Pensées Philosophiques* (1746) and his *Letter about the Blind* (1749). He had a copy of the latest issue of the *Mercure de France* in his pocket, and as he was walking along he began to leaf through it. When he came upon the announcement of the Academy question he was so overwhelmed by the rush of thoughts it aroused in him, that he had to sit down by the side of the road to try and sort them out. Almost a quarter of a century later, in the second of four important autobiographical letters to Malesherbes, he wrote: "Everything I have been able to retain of the great truths which during a quarter of an hour illumined me beneath that tree, has been feebly scattered throughout my three principal writings, this first discourse, the one on inequality, and the treatise on education [*Emile*], which three works are inseparable and together form a single whole" (12 January 1762; OC I: 1136; see also *Confessions* VIII, OC I: 350–352, 356, and *Rousseau Juge de Jean Jacques* II, OC I: 828f).

The major recent editions of the *First Discourse* are:

George R. Havens, *Jean Jacques Rousseau: Discours sur les sciences et les arts, édition critique avec une introduction et un commentaire* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1946).

François Bouchardy's critical edition in the Pléiade *Oeuvres complètes* III: 1–30, 1137–1156.

Michel Launay's critical edition in the *Intégrale Oeuvres complètes*, 3 vols. (Editions du Seuil, 1967, 1971), II: 52–68.

Claude Pichois and René Pintard, *Jean-Jacques entre Socrate et Caton* (Paris: Corti, 1972) contains interesting and previously unpublished fragments and drafts of the *First Discourse* and of related texts; they have been included in the appendix to the more recent printings of the third volume of the Pléiade edition of the *Oeuvres complètes*.

L. Delaruelle, "Les sources principales de J.-J. Rousseau dans le Premier Discours à l'académie de Dijon," *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France* (1912), 19: 245–271, remains helpful.

The Dijon Academy and the circumstances surrounding the 1750 competition are described in Marcel Bouchard, *L'Académie de Dijon et le premier Discours de Rousseau* (Paris, 1950).

I have also consulted the annotated translations by Roger D. and Judith R. Masters, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the First and Second Discourses* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964); Kurt Weigand, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Schriften zur Kulturkritik: Die zwei Diskurse von 1750 u. 1755; eingeleitet, übersetzt und herausgegeben*, 2nd ed. (Hamburg: Meiner, 1971); Henning Ritter, ed., *J. J. Rousseau: Schriften*, 2 vols. (Munich: Hanser, 1978); Dietrich Leube et al., *Jean-Jacques*

Rousseau, Sozialphilosophische und Politische Schriften (Munich: Winkler, 1981), annotations by Eckhart Koch.

Discourse Rousseau called five of his works "Discourses": The present writing, that on *Inequality*, the *Political Economy*, a *Discourse on the Virtue Most Necessary for Heroes*, and a *Discourse on Riches*. The so-called *First* and *Second Discourses*, as well as that on heroic virtue, were occasioned by Academy competitions. They may therefore have called for oratorical flourishes, and at least the appearance of being suited to public delivery. They may therefore also appear to be more popular than formal "Treatises," which is what he calls both the *Social Contract* (in the prefatory Note to that work) and *Emile* (in the letter to Malesherbes cited in the second paragraph of these notes). But the *Discourse on Political Economy*, commissioned and written as an article for the *Encyclopedia*, suffices to show that he looked upon the "discourse" as a flexible form. Machiavelli called his major work *Discourses*; Hobbes refers to the *Leviathan* as "my Discourse of Civil and Ecclesiastical Government" (in the last paragraph of that work); Locke calls his *Treatises of Government* a "Discourse" in the very first line of his preface to them; Algernon Sidney wrote *Discourses Concerning Government*; the list could be extended almost at will, and it would certainly not have to be restricted to popular or political works alone.

A Citizen of Geneva Rousseau, however, stresses the political character of the work from the first: the author has a political identity, but has no personal name. Strictly speaking, he could not claim Genevan citizenship at this time. He had forfeited it by converting to Catholicism just before he turned sixteen, in 1728. He reconverted to Protestantism and was restored to Genevan citizenship on August 1, 1754. He was later to say that he put *Citizen of Geneva* only on the title page of books which he thought would do his native city honor (*La Nouvelle Héloïse*, 2nd preface, OC II: 27).

Here I am the barbarian *Barbarus hic ego sum quia non intelligor illis*, from Ovid, *Tristia* V: X, line 37. Rousseau slightly altered a verse Ovid wrote while exiled among the Sarmatians, a tribe closely related to the Scythians. Just as the sophisticated poet from Imperial Rome felt that the Sarmatians took him for a barbarian, so Rousseau expected sophisticated *ancien régime* France to mistake his defense of austere republican virtue for a defense of barbarism. In the event he did not prove wrong. He had cited the same line from Ovid at the end of an

early letter to de Conzié (17 January 1742, *CC* I: 139, no. 43), and that same year he had also used it as the epigraph to a collection of youthful writings, *La Muse allobroge* (*The Boorish Muse*) (Leigh, *CC* I: 143, n.dd; Ch. Guyot in *OC* II: 1123n); he again chose it as an epigraph for the important late apologetic text, *Dialogues, Rousseau Juge de Jean-Jacques*, *OC* I: 657). Samuel Pufendorf, whose *Droit de la nature et des gens* (*Right of Nature and of Nations*) Rousseau knew well, quotes the same verse of Ovid's in the context of his discussion of the origin of language (*Droit*, Bk. IV: ch. 1, §vi, note a).

Barillot & Son, Geneva It would seem that although the first edition of the *Discourse* appeared with a Genevan publisher's name on the title page, it was brought out by Pissot in Paris, in January 1751 (Leigh, *CC* II: 135f).

For an edition of the *Discourse* that was also to include the replies to objections translated in the present volume, Rousseau wrote the following prefatory note:

What is fame? Here is the unfortunate work to which I owe mine. Certainly this piece which earned me a prize and made me a name, is mediocre at best, and, I dare say, it is one of the slightest in this entire collection. What an abyss of miseries the author would have been spared if this first writing had been received only as it deserved to be! But it seemed fated that an initially unjust acclaim should gradually bring down on me strictures that are even more so.

The dissatisfaction which he here voices with the *Discourse* refers exclusively to its rhetorical and literary features. He never retracted the views he developed in it.

The "at first unjust," that is to say undeserved, "acclaim" which he mentions was quite extraordinary. He describes it briefly in *Confessions* VIII, *OC* I: 363f. The subsequent, even more unjust, "strictures" culminated in 1762 with the Paris Parliament's condemning the *Emile* and ordering Rousseau's arrest, and in Geneva's condemning and publicly burning both the *Emile* and the *Social Contract*, and also ordering their author's arrest. Other expulsions followed, and Rousseau had to flee from one refuge to another for many years.

[2] **The League** Organized in 1576 by the Duc de Guise in order to rally Catholic resistance to Huguenot advances in France and overthrow King Henry III.

[3] **notes . . . additions easy to recognize** They have, on the

contrary, proven quite difficult to identify. Most probably one of the notes he added is his discreet reference to Diderot's *Pensées Philosophiques*, which had been publicly condemned shortly after its publication in 1746. Most probably one of the additions is the passage in which he speaks of "the sentiment of that original freedom for which they [men] seemed born" (I: 3; cf. Bouchardy's note in the Pléiade edition, p. 1240, and Launay, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau écrivain politique* [Grenoble: A.C.E.R., 1971], pp. 141-145; Pichois and Pintard, *op. cit.*, pp. 40, 75). But regardless of what may have been the specific changes he made in his final text, Rousseau is here clearly saying that they sharpened his criticism of the Enlightenment and the *ancien régime*.

We are deceived . . . *Decipimus specie recti*, from Horace, *On the Art of Poetry*, line 25, where Horace says that it is the poets who are thus deceived.

[4] Has the restoration . . . to be examined The Academy's question, Has the restoration of the arts and sciences helped to purify morals?, appears to call for either a yes or a no answer. Rousseau begins by restating that question, and suggesting a third alternative: the arts and sciences have neither purified morals, nor have they failed to do so; rather, they have positively corrupted them. With that reformulation, he completely alters the terms of the discussion.

[5] learned Associations . . . the truly Learned *Savant* (n., adj.), "learned," is etymologically related to *science*, "knowledge," as "artist" is to "art"; it may range in meaning from "scholar(ly)" to "scientist" or "scientific"; similarly, *science*, as in the title of this *Discourse*, is not restricted in meaning to "science" in the narrow sense of the term, or to "natural science," but means "knowledge" or "learning" in any of its senses; as, for example, in Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, a work of which the present *Discourse* is an almost point-by-point criticism. "Arts," in the title as well as throughout this *Discourse*, must also be understood in the broad and now somewhat old-fashioned sense which includes skills and crafts as well as the fine arts.

[8] the Throne of Constantine Constantinople, the modern Istanbul, was conquered by the Turks in 1453.

[9] that original freedom for which they seemed born Cf. "Man is born free, everywhere he is in chains." *Social Contract* I: 1.

[9]* Ichthyophagi Literally "fish-eaters"; the episode is also mentioned by Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws* XXI: 8.

[11] **virtue . . . the strength and vigor of the soul** Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), whose *Essays* are a constant source and guide for the early Rousseau, uses the expression, though not as a definition of virtue, in "Of the Younger Cato," *Essays* I: 37 (*Oeuvres complètes*, A. Thibaudet and M. Rat, eds. [Paris: Pléiade edition, 1962, p. 225], cited hereafter as *OC*; and in *The Complete Essays*, translated by Donald Frame, Stanford University Press, 1958); Rousseau uses the expression again in this *Discourse* [49]. He develops the view that strength of soul defines heroic virtue, and that the younger Cato is the embodiment of that form of virtue, in his 1751 *Discourse on this Question: "What is the Virtue most Necessary for Heroes?"* (*OC* II: 1272f).

[14] **Pyrrhonism** The skepticism or zeteticism founded by Pyrrho of Elis (c. 365-c. 275 B.C.) that seeks suspension of judgment or *epoche* and imperturbability or *ataraxia* (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives and Opinions of Philosophers* IX: 61-108, see 107); "Pyrrhonism" is therefore commonly regarded as undermining the bases of loyalty and social life.

[14]* **I like, says Montaigne** In "On the Art of Conversing," *Essays* III: 8 (*OC* 901; Frame tr., 702); the exception is most probably Diderot.

[17] **Consider Egypt . . . Sesostris** Legendary Egyptian ruler in the 13th century B.C. (see Herodotus, *Histories* II: 102-110). **conquered by Cambyses** Second king of Persia, he conquered Egypt in 525 B.C. **by the Greeks** Alexander the Great conquered it in 332 B.C.; **the Romans** conquered it under Augustus, in 30 B.C.; **the Arabs** did so under Calif Omar I, in 638 A.D.; **the Turks** did so in 1517.

[18] **Consider Greece . . . twice vanquished Asia** In the Trojan War, and at Salamis in 480 B.C. **the Macedonian's yoke** Philip of Macedon's (382-336 B.C.) defeat of the allied armies of Athens and Thebes at the battle of Chaeronea in 338 B.C. marked the end of Greek independence. **Demosthenes** The greatest of Athenian orators (385-322 B.C.), he tried to alert his compatriots to the Macedonian danger before Chaeronea, and to rouse them against Macedonian rule after it.

[19] **Rome . . . Ennius** Regarded by the Romans as their first poet (239-189 B.C.). **Terence** The Roman comic poet (c. 185-159 B.C.). Romulus, who founded Rome in 735 B.C. was, according to tradition, a **shepherd**. **Ovid** (43 B.C.-18 A.D.) Rousseau here refers to him as the author of *The Art of Love*, although he had drawn on another poem

of his for the epigraph of this *Discourse*. **Catullus** (84-54 B.C.), writer of erotic poems. **Martial** (40-104 A.D.), writer of epigrammatic satires of social life. **Arbiter of good taste** Petronius, author of the *Satyricon*, and a companion of the Emperor Nero (14-68 A.D.), who put him in charge of the Imperial pleasures in 66 A.D. (cf. Tacitus, *Annals* XVI: 18f). Nero is again excoriated in the speech which Rousseau has Pyrrhus deliver, this *Discourse* [32].

[21] **China . . . the yoke of the . . . Tartar** Genghis Khan invaded China in the first quarter of the 13th century.

[22] **Persians . . . a Philosophical Romance** Xenophon (430-354 B.C.), *Education of Cyrus*; Rousseau's remark suggests that he regards Xenophon's account as truer than the factually true accounts of antiquarians; he called his own *Emile* a romance (Bk. V, *OC* IV: 777; tr. 416). **the Scythians** The warlike and proverbially savage nomad people who in classical antiquity lived in what are now southwestern Russia and the Balkans. As the epigraph to this *Discourse* indicates, Rousseau knew perfectly well that opinions about the Scythians were, to say the least, divided: Montaigne speaks well of them in several essays, from which Rousseau draws in the present *Discourse*, e.g., "Of Pedantry," *Essays* I: 25 (*OC* 143, tr. 106); "Of Cannibals," *Essays* I: 31 (*OC* 206f, tr. 154f). In the *Second Discourse* (p. 160 above), he quotes a passage in which Justin praises them. But he also knew Herodotus's account (*Histories* IV: 1-143), and the tradition according to which, as Pufendorf put it, the Scythians ate human flesh and killed their own children on the pretext of religion (*Droit* II: 3, §viii); see also, Shakespeare, *King Lear* I. i. 116-118. Gibbon summarizes what was known of the Scythians at the time in *Decline and Fall* (ch. 26). **the Germans . . . whose simplicity . . . a pen weary** Tacitus (c. 55-120 A.D.), whose description of the spirit in which he wrote about the Germans Rousseau here quotes literally (*Germania* XIX: 20). **that rustic nation** Presumably the Swiss.

[22]* **happy Nations . . . Montaigne unhesitatingly prefers** "Of Cannibals," *Essays* I: 31 (in particular *OC* 204, 213, tr. 153, 159). Rousseau exaggerates Montaigne's preference for the cannibals' polity to Plato's *Laws*. What Montaigne says is that he regrets knowledge of the American Indians' way of life was not available "at a time when there were men better able to judge of it than we are; I regret that Lycurgus and Plato did not have it, for it seems to me that what experience shows us about those nations exceeds not only all the

pictures with which poetry has embellished the golden age and all of its inventions in fancying a happy human condition, but also the conception and the very desire of philosophy."

[23]* **the Athenians' . . . upright Tribunal** The Arcopagus. **the Romans think of medicine** Plutarch, *Life of Marcus Cato, the Censor*, xii; Montaigne, "Of the Resemblance of Children to Fathers," *Essays* (OC 745, tr. 581). **the Spaniards . . . forbid their lawyers** Montaigne, "Of Experience," *Essays* III: 13 (OC 1043, tr. 816).

[24] **a Tyrant was . . . assembling** Peisistratos (605-527 B.C.) is traditionally said to have caused Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* to be collected and organized into the form in which they have been handed down, and to have made them the basis of Athenian public education; Cicero, *Of the Orator* III: 34; see also Diderot's *Encyclopedia* article "Bibliothèque" ("Library").

[27] **"I have," he says . . .** Rousseau is here paraphrasing Plato's *Apology of Socrates*, 21c-22b in the translation of it which Diderot had made during his confinement at Vincennes. See *Oeuvres complètes*, Diekmann, Proust, Varloot eds. (Paris: Hermann, 1978), vol. IV, pp. 251-253. Rousseau merely follows Diderot's translation in speaking of "artists" where Socrates speaks of "artisans."

[31] **the elder Cato** Marcus Porcius Cato (234-149 B.C.), surnamed the Censor, was a consul, general, diplomat, traditional model of stern Roman republican virtue and consistent opponent of Greek learning and sophistication, who in his private capacity practiced agriculture and wrote an early treatise on the subject. **Epicurus** (c. 342-270 B.C.) taught materialism and hedonism. **Zeno** (336-264 B.C.) founded the Stoic sect. **Arcesilaus** (c. 315-240 B.C.) was the founder of Academic Skepticism. They are roughly contemporaries, and together represent the dominant post-Socratic-and-Aristotelian philosophical alternatives in antiquity (see also *Observations* [39]*, p. 41*). **Ever since . . .** Seneca (c. 3 B.C.-65 A.D.), *Letters to Lucillus* 95 (13), cited by Montaigne in "Of Pedantry," *Essays* I: 25 (OC 140, tr. 103), from which Rousseau quotes at length later in this *Discourse* [51]*.

[32] **Fabricius** Roman general, consul and censor (d. c. 250 B.C.), traditionally surnamed "The Just," noted for his incorruptibility and his dignified bearing in the face of adversity (see especially Vergil, *Aeneid* V: 843f; Seneca, *On Providence* 3; Plutarch, *Life of Pyrrhus* XVIII: 20f). In Cicero's judgment, both Fabricius and Marcus Porcius

Cato possessed only a popular virtue, not virtue proper (*On Duties* III: iv, 16). **prey of a flute-player** Again the Emperor Nero. **Cineas** Ambassador of Pyrrhus, he is reported by Plutarch to have spoken of the Roman Senate in these terms (*Life of Pyrrhus* XIX, near the end).

Rousseau penciled this famous prosopopeia of Fabricius during the rush of inspiration he experienced on the road to Vincennes on first reading the Dijon Academy's question.

[33] **Louis XII . . . Henry IV** Kings of France. The first, surnamed "Father of the People," ruled 1498-1515. The second, surnamed "The Great," ruled 1589-1610; in 1598, he issued the Edict of Nantes, guaranteeing the religious and political rights of Protestants.

[36] **an ancient tradition** In his "Letter to Grimm" [17], Rousseau tells how he was led to wonder about the ancient Egyptians' view of the sciences by a passage in Plato (see pp. 57f). The reference is to the *Phaedrus* (274c-275b), where Socrates has an Egyptian king reject the god Theuth's gift of the arts, and especially of writing, on the grounds that it would do more harm than good.

[36]* **the Prometheus fable** The version of this fable which Rousseau here cites is drawn from Plutarch's essay "How to Profit from One's Enemies," 2. It is an essay which he rereads and rethinks to the very end of his life: See *Rêveries* IV, OC I: 1024; *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, translated by Charles E. Butterworth (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), p. 43.

All ancient sources—Hesiod's *Works and Days* (42-105), *Theogony* (561-616), Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound*, Plato's *Statesman* (274 c-d)—agree in showing Prometheus's gift accompanied by suffering for men. Plutarch has his Prometheus go on to say that fire can also profit those who learn how to use it. That is also the conclusion suggested by the title of his essay. That conclusion is entirely consistent with Rousseau's argument in the remainder of the *Discourse*.

Plutarch has Prometheus himself warn against the dangers of fire; the frontispiece assigns that task to Rousseau: "Prometheus's torch is the torch of the Sciences made to quicken great geniuses; . . . the Satyr who, seeing fire for the first time, runs toward it and wants to embrace it, represents the vulgar who, seduced by the brilliance of Letters, indiscreetly give themselves over to study; . . . the Prometheus who cries out and warns them of the danger is the Citizen of Geneva" ("About a New Refutation," [11], pp. 94f above).

Rousseau gave much thought to the illustrations for his works. He

found this frontispiece, drawn by Pierre, very bad, whereas he found that for the *Second Discourse* very good (letter of 26 December 1757; CC IV: 408, no. 595).

[37] the well to which truth has withdrawn In his "Letter to Grimm" [28] (p. 60 above), Rousseau rightly points out that the expression is as old as philosophy itself. It is commonly attributed to Democritus (fl. 420 B.C.) (Fragment 117); Montaigne cites it, gives its source, and rejects it in "On the Art of Discussion," *Essays* III: 8 (OC 906, tr. 708), an essay from which Rousseau had quoted above.

[38]* the Peripatetics Or Aristotelians. René **Descartes** (1596-1650) had propounded his theory of extended substance and vortices in order to provide a rigorously mathematical and mechanical physics; cf. *Le Monde* (Adam-Tannery ed. XI: 43-47), *Principles of Philosophy* (II: 33-35; III: 45-53; IV: 2). Descartes's theory was overthrown by Newton.

[39] in what ratios bodies attract one another Newton's law of universal gravitation: bodies attract one another in direct proportion to their mass and in inverse proportion to the square of their distance. **the proportions . . . swept** Kepler's second law: the vector radius from the sun to a planet sweeps out equal areas in equal times. **man sees everything in God** The doctrine propounded by Nicolas Malebranche (1638-1715) in *Recherche de la vérité* (*Search after Truth*). **two clocks** An image used by Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646-1716) to illustrate his doctrine of the preestablished harmony (e.g., *Second Eclaircissement du Nouveau Système*; and Bayle, *Dictionnaire*, "Rorarius," note h, near the end). **what stars may be inhabited** Probably refers to Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle's (1657-1757) work of scientific popularization, *Entretiens sur la pluralité des mondes* (*Conversations about the Multiplicity of Worlds*). **insects reproduce** A subject studied during the decades preceding the writing of this *Discourse* by R.-A. Ferchaud de Réaumur (1683-1757), as well as by Charles Bonnet (1720-1793), both of whom Rousseau knew; Bonnet later wrote a refutation of Rousseau's *Second Discourse* under the pseudonym Philopolis (see pp. 231-237 above).

[41] sumptuary laws That is to say, laws to tax and curb luxury; Rousseau returns to the issue in his "Letter to Raynal" [7] p. 29 above, and in the "Observations" [51]f, p. 44 above. He deals with it at some length in the *Discourse on Political Economy* (OC III: 252; translation by Charles Sherover [New York: Harper & Row, 1984], p. 151). In the

Considerations on . . . Poland, he again stresses that sumptuary laws cannot possibly extirpate luxury (OC III: 965; W. Kendall tr. [Indianapolis: Library of Liberal Arts, 1972], 18). **this paradox** That the pursuit of personal wealth and the promotion of luxury contribute to the common weal; or, as Mandeville put it in the subtitle to his *Fable of the Bees*, "Private Vices, Publick Benefits." This at the time rather novel doctrine of some English economists had recently been brought to the attention of the French public by J.-F. Melon, and it had been cleverly popularized by Voltaire in two notorious poems, "Le Mondain" (1736), and "Défense du Mondain, ou l'apologie du luxe" (1737). Although Rousseau does not here name these poems and their author, they are very clearly the targets of this criticism: he apostrophizes Voltaire by name three paragraphs later. **The ancient political Thinkers** The same thought is stated in almost the same words by Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755), *Of the Spirit of the Laws* (1748) III: 3. **One will tell you** "Sir Petty assumed, in his calculations, that a man in England is worth what he would be sold for in Algiers. That must be true only of England. There are countries where a man is worth nothing; and others where he is worth less than nothing" (Montesquieu, *Of the Spirit of the Laws* XXIII: 17, and cf. III: 13). The reference is to Sir William Petty, author of *Essay on Political Arithmetick* (1680); Algiers is where Moorish pirates sold Christian prisoners into slavery. **Sybarite . . . Lacedaemonians** The inhabitants of the Greek city of Sybaris were so notorious for their love of luxury that their name has remained a synonym for dissoluteness. Sybaris was destroyed by the Crotoniats in 515 B.C. The Sybarites claimed that the Crotoniats had Spartan help. The Crotoniats denied it. Herodotus, after reporting these conflicting claims, invites the reader to decide between them (*Histories* V, 44f). Rousseau clearly believes the Crotoniats' version of the events.

[42] **The Monarchy of Cyrus** Alexander the Great conquered Persia in 334 B.C.; **the Scythians** resisted the Persians under Darius (512 B.C.) and later the Macedonians under Alexander. **Two famed Republics** Rome and Carthage—which Montesquieu compares (in *Causes de la grandeur des Romains* IV) in the same terms as those in which Rousseau here compares them—Rome defeating Carthage in the Punic wars, 265-242 B.C., 218-201 B.C., 146 B.C. **The Roman Empire** fell to the barbarian invasions of the Goths, the Vandals, and the Huns. **The Franks** conquered the Gauls, and **the Saxons** invaded Britain in the 5th and 6th centuries. **poor Mountaineers** The Swiss defeated the Hapsburgs of Austria in 1315 and 1386 and Charles the Bold, Duke of

Burgundy, in 1476. **Charles the Fifth's heir** Philip II of Spain (1527–1598) was, as an early English translator of the *Discourse* remarks, defeated by “[t]he *Hollanders* whose chief Employment was the *Herring-fisbery*”; they successfully rebelled against Spanish rule in 1568, and a decade later established their independence (*A Discourse . . . By a Citizen of Geneva*, R. Wynne, A.M., tr., London, 1752, p. 32n).

[44] **famed Arouet** More famed, of course, in his public guise and by his pen name, Voltaire (1694–1778).

[44]* **reflections [by] Plato** In the *Republic* V: 451c–464b; Rousseau frequently returned to this question; for example, in *Discourse on Inequality*, Epistle Dedicatory [20] and Part I [42] with the editorial note; Book V of *Emile*; and throughout the *Nouvelle Héloïse*.

[45] **Carle** Vanloo (1705–1765) and Jean-Baptiste-Marie **Pierre** (1713–1789) were renowned painters. **Praxiteles** and **Phidias**, the greatest sculptors of classical Greece. Jean-Baptiste **Pigal[le]** (1714–1785) was a fashionable sculptor.

[47] **the Goths ravaged Greece** Under Alaric I, in the early 5th century. **Charles the Eighth** King of France (1483–1498) who conquered Tuscany and Naples in 1495. Both episodes are taken almost literally from Montaigne's “Of Pedantry,” *Essays* I: 25 (OC 143, tr. 106); but in Montaigne the remark about the effects of studies on martial polities served as an introduction to the illustrative episodes, whereas in Rousseau it serves as their conclusion. Montaigne had earlier been speaking of Sparta, and it is to Sparta that he refers when speaking of “this martial polity.” Rousseau failed to make the verbal change required by his paraphrase of Montaigne's paragraph, and hence his reference to “this” martial polity remains without an antecedent. The whole of Montaigne's essay is particularly relevant to the argument of the subsequent three paragraphs.

[49] **Cannae . . . Trasimene** Hannibal's greatest victories against Rome, in 216 and 217 B.C., respectively. **crossed the Rubicon** In 49 B.C., thereby in effect bringing the Republic to an end.

[50] **more strength and vigor than . . . bravery** “So sensible were the Romans of the imperfection of valor without skill and practice, that, in their language, the name of an army was borrowed from the word which signified exercise (*exercitus ab exercitando*).” Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, ch. 1; see also Cicero, *On Duties* I: 61–92. On **strength and vigor** Cf. this *Discourse* [11], p. 5 above.

[51] **said a Wise man** Montaigne, in "Of Pedantry," *Essays* I: 25 (OC 137, tr. 101); the whole of Rousseau's long note immediately following is also drawn from that essay (OC 141f, tr. 104f).

[51]* **Pens Philosoph** Diderot, *Pensées Philosophiques* VIII: "Of some people it ought to be said not that they fear God, but that they are afraid of him." Even this discreet reference was quite daring, since his friend's book had been publicly condemned in 1746; cf. the "Preface" [3], p. 2 above, and the editorial note.

[51]** **the greatest of their Kings** Agesilaus (early 9th century B.C.), see Plutarch, *Sayings of the Spartans*, 67. **Plato** In *Alcibiades* I: 121d-122a; however, see also Plato, *Laws* III: 694a-698a. **Astyages, in Xenophon** This frequently cited episode is found in *Education of Cyrus* I:iii, 17; Montaigne's paraphrase, which Rousseau is here citing, comes much closer to equating the just with the legal than does Cyrus's teacher in Xenophon's account. *τύπτω* "I hit." **genre demonstrativo** The school term for the rhetorical form which Aristotle calls epideictic; cf. Aristotle, *Rhetoric* I: 3, with Quintillian, *Institutes* II: xx, 23.

[55] **great Monarch** Louis XIV (reigned 1643-1715) established numerous academies.

[56] **his august successor** Louis XV, who reigned 1715-1774. **imitated by all the Kings** Among them by Stanislas, deposed king of Poland, to whose "Observations" about this *Discourse* Rousseau replied at length (pp. 31-52 above).

[57] **there are no bodies** George Berkeley (1685-1753). **no substance other than matter, and no God other than the world.** Since Rousseau is attributing both of these tenets to one doctrine, and since the equation between God and the world most clearly points to Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), it would seem that he is here suggesting that Spinoza was a materialist, a bold but defensible interpretation, cf. *Ethics* I: 15 (scholium), and letter no. 56 with Bayle, *Dictionnaire*, s.v. Spinoza, note N, II. **neither virtues nor vices** Evidently the philosophers' "internal doctrine" (see the editorial note on "Observations" [39], p. 313 below), in the form given to that doctrine by Diderot and practiced by his epigone Melchior Grimm; cf. Diderot's letter to Landois of 26 June 1756 and Grimm's *Correspondance littéraire* for 1 July and 15 July 1756, with *Rousseau Juge de Jean-Jacques*, Dialogue II (OC I: 841f), Dialogue I (OC I: 695); cf. *Confessions* IX (OC I: 468), *Rêveries* III (OC I: 1022, tr. 38). **men**

are wolves Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), near the beginning of the Epistle Dedicatory to his *De Cive* or *On the Citizen* (1651), remarks that "both sayings are very true: 'that man to man is a kind of God; and that man to man is an arrant wolf.'" *De Cive*, H. Warrander, ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 24; hereafter cited as *On the Citizen*; cf. Plautus, *Asinaria*, II, iv, 88.

[58] **Leucippus** Founded the atomist school (mid-5th century B.C.). **Diagoras** Disciple of the atomists, he was surnamed "the Atheist," and in 411 B.C. Athens prosecuted him for impiety. **the dangerous reveries of Hobbes** In the Epistle Dedicatory to his 1649 French translation of Hobbes's *On the Citizen* which Rousseau used, Sorbière had expressed his preference for "the reveries of Hobbes, Gassendi, and Descartes," to the more serious thoughts of some other philosophers. Rousseau's own last writing was called *Reveries*.

[58]* **Sultan Achmed [III]** Ruled from 1703 to 1730, and established a printing press in 1727. The anecdote about **Calif Omar**, who ruled 634-641, is recounted in Diderot's *Encyclopedia* article, "Bibliothèque" ("Library"). **Gregory the Great** Pope from 590 to 604 who was reputed to have had all pagan books in the Palatine library destroyed, and in the *Pensées Philosophiques* to which Rousseau had earlier referred—this *Discourse* [51]—Diderot speaks of Gregory's "barbarous zeal" against letters, adding "[i]f it had been up to that Pontiff alone, we would be in the condition of the Mohamedans, who are reduced to reading nothing but their Koran" (no. XLIV). As for Gregorian chant, see *Essay on . . . Languages*, pp. 291f above.

[59] **Verulam** Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was created Baron Verulam in 1618. **Descartes** See also this *Discourse* [38]*, and on **Newton** see [39]; on Bacon, Descartes, and Newton, see also Jean Le Rond d'Alembert's (1717-1783) *Preliminary Discourse to the Encyclopedia* (pt. II, near the beginning), an important manifesto of the Enlightenment which appeared within a year of this *Discourse* of Rousseau's. **feel the strength to go forth alone** Descartes describes himself as doing so in his *Discourse on Method* II (Gilson ed.), 16:24-30. **The Prince of Eloquence** M. Tullius Cicero (106-43 B.C.), orator, statesman, philosopher, was consul in 63 B.C. **perhaps the greatest of Philosophers** Bacon was Lord Chancellor in 1618.

[61] **speak well . . . act well** The Athenians and the Spartans; cf. Plutarch, *Marcus Cato* XXII: 4, cited by Montaigne, again in "Of Pedantry," *Essays* I: 25 (OC 142, tr. 105).